

Black student dissent to continue

by Dorie Klein
College Editor

Within the past month, black student uprisings have swept a dozen colleges across the country, violence has flared on several campuses, reports have come out in support of and opposed to Black Studies programs, and the only certain outcome is that the revolt will continue.

At the University of California at Santa Barbara, a black student was arrested at a rally for using an allegedly obscene word. The Black Student Union held a rally the next day and led the crowd of 1500 in a cheer: "One, two, three, fuck!" No one was arrested.

A speaker at the rally commented on the lunacy of arresting students for "saying the word 'fuck' when the real obscenities are words like kill, murder, napalm and Vietnam." And others, remarking on how they had used the same words in lecture halls without being stopped by the police said: "The real question is, is there any free speech on this fucking campus?"

The Black Student Union at Santa Barbara had formed a United Front with the United Mexican-American Students and Students for a Democratic Society to press their demands to the administration.

Among these were revoking the warrant of the BSU member charged with obscenity, issuing a statement of no-censorship-on-campus, forbidding police on campus, hiring blacks in the Athletic Department, hiring Mexican-American counselors, establishing a community relations program and creating Black Studies and Mexican-American Studies departments.

Panthers shot

The same week, at the UC campus at Los Angeles, two black student members of the Black Panther Party were shot to death after leaving a meeting called to discuss the school's new Afro-American Center.

The two, John Huggins and Alprentice Carter, had supported the UCLA Black Student Union in the group's opposition to the community steering committee for the center. The committee had appointed a director for the center not approved by the BSU, and this became the focal point of the struggle between the Panthers and the group supporting the committee, US, led by Ron Karenga. US is a defender of "cultural nationalism" and opposes the Panther's politically revolutionary stand.

Two brothers in US, George and Larry Stiner, have been arrested by the police in connection with the murders. A Panther spokesman has said that his group considers "four people responsible, and we're holding Ron Karenga responsible too."

At San Francisco State College and Berkeley, protests go on. Last Thursday, police on horseback broke up demonstrations at SF State after the Superior Court issued a restraining order forbidding students to picket on campus and limiting the number of pickets outside to five per entrance. By noon, 500 were picketing.

At Berkeley, police in wedges broke into the crowds after 1,000 strikers marched across the campus to Sproul Hall. They were enforcing an order against the obstruction of campus entrances by pickets.

At the University of Minnesota, 50 students occupied the office of Admissions and Records after failing to reach agreement with President Malcolm Moos over black demands, and at the predominantly Negro Wilberforce University in Ohio, classes were suspended while administrators worked out grievances concerning disciplinary cases. A fire had destroyed the student union there the week before.

Brandeis disrupted

Students were ending their disruptions at colleges in the East. At Brandeis University, 75 black students occupied a building for ten days and renamed it Malcolm X University. They agreed to leave in exchange for amnesty, after finding President Morris Abram unresponsive to their demands.

One student noted that the action had "exposed to the nation the inability of one of the most well-known liberal colleges in America to deal constructively with racism." The group has not given up on its demands, but intends to continue the fight. "At present," a member of the Afro-American Organization said, "the setting of the university does not allow us the academic freedom so sorely needed for our development as black people." Among the demands is the establishment of an African and Afro-American Studies department.

The Brandeis students intend to establish a Malcolm X University in Roxbury, Boston's ghetto. They have won their demand for a Black Studies department on campus.

At another well-known school, Swarthmore College, the Afro-American Students Society held a burning-in-effigy of the college and then occupied a building during the early days of January. Their action was terminated by the sudden death of President Courtney Smith, after a week of meetings and discussion had shaken the school out of its customary apathy.

Similarly roused from indifference were those at Queens College in New York, where black and Puerto Rican students in the program known as SEEK — Search for Elevation, Education and Knowledge — sat in, at, and finally stormed, the office of SEEK Director Joseph Mulholland.

The students and staff members involved in SEEK, which is funded by the state to help the underprivileged through tutorials and financial assistance, were demanding autonomy for the program. A leader of the protest said that it had become "a vehicle for white employment and racism. It provides an education geared to the white experience alone, and that's not all there is."

The SEEK students at Queens have separate classes and meet in a building off the main campus. Mulholland has been charged with discriminatory hiring practices and mismanagement of funds, although one white called his "irrelevant to the whole thing — like Archduke Ferdinand was irrelevant to World War I." Although some whites support the

demands, they have been asked not to enter the dispute by SEEK people themselves.

At Pennsylvania State University, the black students' Douglas Association used unconventional tactics to achieve their aims. They were demanding the admission of 1,000 blacks, increased University assistance to these students, and the hiring of black faculty members. Nearly 100 marched into the office of President Walker and silently built a brick wall of three feet topped by a single black brick, with a note attached: "Next time we won't build a wall."

The wall was to symbolize the breakdown of communication between the blacks and the administration. The Douglas students then appealed to state legislators in Harrisburg. Some legislators have threatened to withhold University appropriations unless the demands are met and black enrollment increased, and announced their intention to launch an investigation of Penn State's policies on admission and faculty hiring.

SUNY victory

The Black Student Alliance at SUNY at Albany won a victory Jan. 13 when President Evan Collins agreed to their demands. These were the institution of a course in Afro-American history for the spring semester, 1969; the establishment of an Afro-American Studies department by fall, and the enrollment of 300 minority-group students next year. The BSA is to play a major role in the choosing of instructors and students and the establishing of curriculum.

In 1967, there were less than

20 blacks at Albany. They formed the BSA and won the admission of 200 additional blacks by 1968. They began to agitate for black history courses and mobilized white support on this issue. The administration signed the demands when the students threatened a takeover of the president's office.

The black students want to make their department "relevant not only to black students, but also to our brothers and sisters in the community." One BSA member said: "We support all people controlling the institutions that affect their lives."

"To bring about those goals," he continued, "people are justified in using any means necessary." The students are scheduled to meet Wednesday with President Collins to begin work on implementation.

Harvard report

Harvard University, which has not had black student agitation on its stately campus, has published a report recommending the establishment of a Black Studies Program, and intends to implement the recommendation.

A student at Harvard will be able to major in Afro-American Studies in addition to any concentration in other fields he might have, and would receive a degree in it. The report also urged the creation of a black cultural center, similar to Hillel House or Newman Center, and pressed for additional Negro graduate students on fellowships.

The report was the work of a faculty panel which had spent nine months studying and talking to black students at Harvard. The committee found the students concerned with the same problems as whites — course

offerings, social and cultural life, inter-university relationships and university-community relations — but recognized a profound difference in outlook and needs.

"The desire for some 'all black experience'," the report stated, "is reflected in the almost unanimous desire of black students for an exchange program between Harvard-Radcliffe and black Southern colleges."

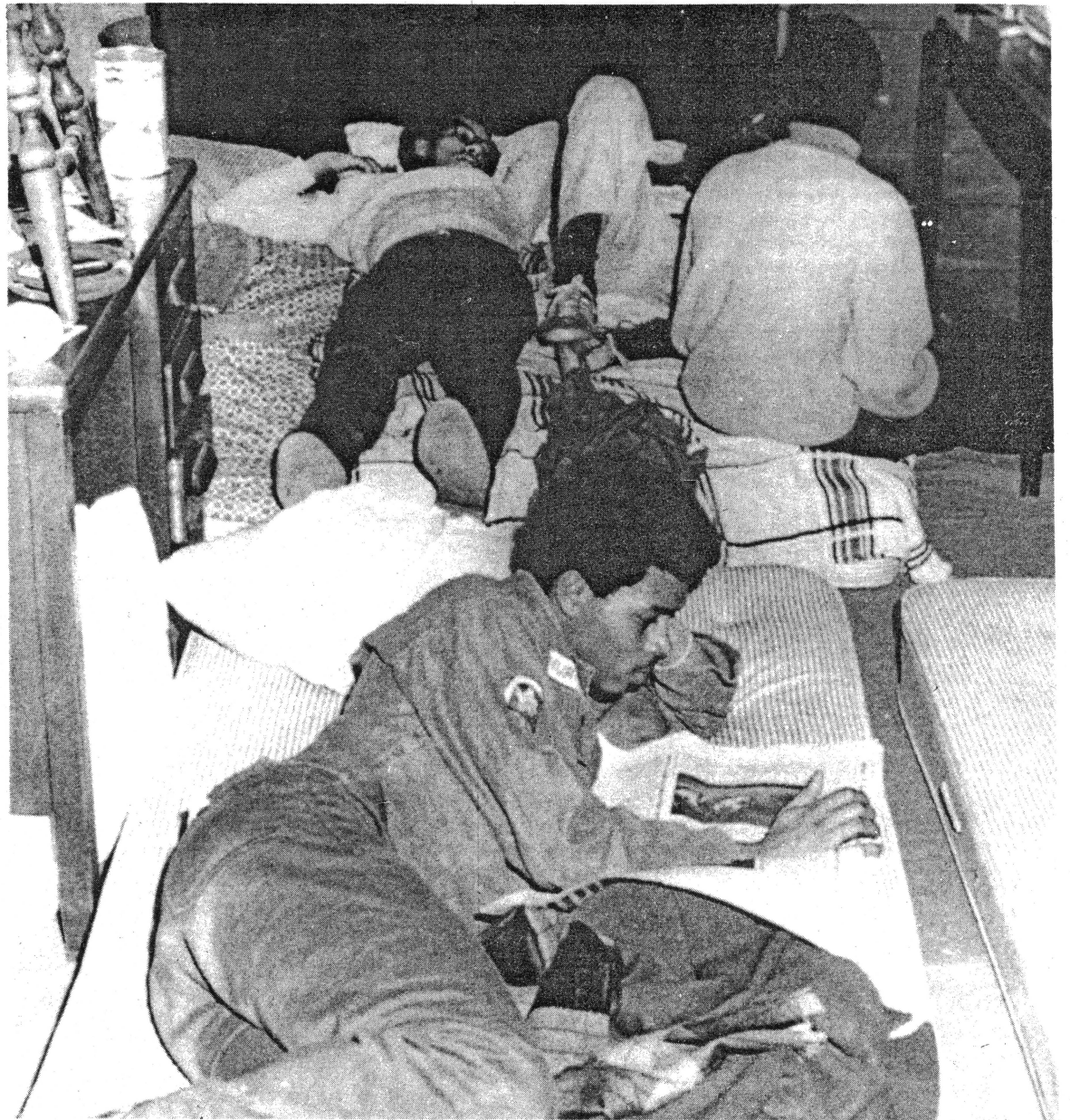
Roy Wilkins, of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, has announced his opposition to the creation of Black Studies Departments and black dormitories.

He said that the NAACP is planning to take the students' demands to court, if necessary, to combat what he calls "simply another version of segregation and Jim Crow."

He believes that the courts will find such demands illegal by the same token that segregation by whites was declared illegal in 1954. He warned of the danger of a minority group talking about "separation and apartheid."

Wilkins' comment on black militants — "They ought to be in the library studying to get a degree, so they could do some good" — sounded ironically like the words of California Gov. Ronald Reagan, who told a cheering crowd last week that he had "run out of give" to campus militants and "there will be no capitulation."

Opposing the Wilkins viewpoint was Roy Innis of the Congress of Racial Equality, who considers the demands legitimate and has pledged CORE to the defense of the students should the NAACP bring court action against the creation of all-black programs.



Inside Brandeis building

Students camp inside Ford Hall at Brandeis University almost a month ago.